

The

# PHILOSOPHER'S STONE

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*The*  
**PHILOSOPHER'S STONE**

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

RUTH B. DROWN, *Owner and Publisher*

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*May your Holiday Season  
be bright with Happiness*



### *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

*O little town of Bethlehem  
How still we see thee lie;  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
The silent stars go by;  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth  
The Everlasting Light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
Are met in thee tonight.*

*O morning stars together  
Proclaim thy holy birth  
And praises sing to God the King,  
And peace to men on earth,  
Where charity stands watching  
And faith holds wide the door,  
The dark night wakes, the glory breaks,  
And Christmas comes once more.*

*How silently, how silently  
The wondrous gift is given;  
So God imparts to human hearts  
The blessings of His heaven;  
No ear to hear his coming,  
But in this world of sin,  
Where meekness will receive Him,  
Still, the dear Christ enters in.*

PHILLIPS BROOKS



# *Fundamental Principles of Human Life and of Living*

SHERMAN ELSWORTH KNAPP

Without attempting to discuss the evolutionary processes through which the human Ego has passed in its journey from states of least consciousness, on up to the seeming miracle of self-consciousness which lifts it above and distinguishes it from the lower forms of animal life, let us proceed to consider man upon the plane of his present state of being, as a sentient, self-conscious entity possessing latent within him all the God-like attributes of the All-Good. Of a being possessing a body, mind and soul, a perfect vehicle through which can and may be expressed the Divine Will. A being made in the image and likeness of Divinity, a child of the living God, a center of conscious life, of thought and of will. Possessing all the potentialities of unfoldment of these attributes unto the highest. A being projected forth to express the Divine Will in its myriad forms; walking in the "light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world", bringing with it the splendid inheritance of all past experiences with the ever present urge of unfolding consciousness welling up from the center of being, possessing a mind out of which proceeds powers of discernment, reason and judgment. The mastery of this mighty instrument of thought is the key to life. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he".

This being true, thought measures the progress of the Ego on its eternal journey toward Godhood.



Is it not all important that our thoughts should ever be constructive instead of destructive, kindly instead of unkindly, pure instead of impure and of love instead of hatred?

That man should understand himself and his relationship to the eternal universe that surrounds him is the purpose of life. Life being conditioned in action the soul presses onward and upward ever seeking at-one-ment with the source of its being, whilst personal man upon the plane of desire seeks expression upon the material or objective plane, and mind-man, the thinker, seeks to apprehend, to understand, to comprehend the problems of life as he finds them facing him upon every hand.

To bring into perfect accord, into perfect harmony, all of the functions of his being is the life-task of man, the thinker.

As "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty", so eternal endeavor is the price of progress. As the Ego enters the path of self-consciousness, enters the estate of man, he begins to perceive that certain attitudes of thought invariably produce certain results possessing and reflecting all of the attributes and qualities of the thoughts that bring them into form. The exploitation of these realms has taught man to discriminate between the false and the true, between the harmonious and the inharmonious, between the constructive and destructive attitude of mind and thought. It has taught him that fear produces fear not only in his own mind, but in the mind of others; that doubt increases doubt; that fear and doubt are negative forces that destroy peace of mind and paralyze action. He finds, upon the other hand, that the exercise of the positive attributes of faith, hope, love and courage, invariably dispel doubt and fear and restore harmony



and peace and point the way to ultimate triumph toward the realization of his ideals.

Thus we find that constructive thinking is the royal pathway leading ever onward and upward. We find that the practise of optimism enlarges the scope of our vision, increases the measures of our activities and places us in harmony with all of the creative forces of the universe.

Let us consider ourselves as having entered upon an eternal journey out of the eternity of the past, we have our faces set toward the eternity of the future, each individual entity of us, whatever may be our relative position upon the spiral course of evolution, each soul is the center of the universe unto itself. Let us consider that where we stand, others have stood, and still others will stand, when we shall have mounted higher. And as we gaze upon the heights and see our elders far up on the ladder with faces still set toward the eternal goal, let no thought of envy possess us. And again, as we gaze downward upon our younger brothers and sisters, who have not yet reached the same rung of the ladder upon which we stand, let us extend our hands to them with love and compassion, to the end that as we are lifted up, we will draw all others unto us. Let us strive to compete with ourselves, not with other personalities, not with other individuals; to excell others is not worth while, does not bring progress and peace to us nor to them, but to excell ourselves brings lasting triumph and abiding satisfaction, is indeed *true* competition.

As we mount the heights of accomplishment, as we more and more realize the purpose of life, as the vista of our ultimate destiny more fully dawns upon us, as we come into conscious possession of the imperishable heritage of God's love, wisdom and power, working



in and through us, to express and make manifest the Divine Will, as we draw nearer to at-one-ment with the source of our being, as we realize upon each successive plane of action the fruition of our ideals and gain therefrom inspiration for ideals far beyond, as we gather ourselves the priceless gifts of the Father so richly bestowed, upon all those who love Him, as we move forward in the perfect light and wisdom of His way, our example and influence will inspire others to follow until the whole human race will be lifted up in its consciousness to undreamed of realms of joy and of glory.



### *Sky Song*

Oh lonely white cloud-fields of the sky,  
I would lose myself in the immensity of your  
aloneness.

Boundless and limitless,  
You traverse the azure playgrounds of heaven;  
Or calmly wait, like thick white foam,  
To be shaped by an Unseen Hand  
Into rain, sleet or snow.

And I, too, await the Divine Architect  
To mold me into more than man.

—*Hasmick Vartabedian*



To be conscious that you are ignorant is a great  
step to knowledge.—*Beaconsfield*.



# *The Secret Knowledge*

*A Chapter from "The Finding of the Third Eye"*

VERA STANLEY ALDER

LONDON, ENGLAND

Having studied our world according both to the modern matter-o-fact scientist and the less orthodox modern ideas, let us now turn and plunge into the past, and see what our ancestors knew, and how their knowledge helped them.

They prophesied the long dark Age of Ignorance from which we are at present emerging. That ignorance has engendered in us the habit of scoffing at everything which is not 'ordinary', 'normal' or able to be weighed and measured by scientists.

The scientists themselves have reached a point where they are no longer dealing with purely physical or chemical things — they have pushed upwards through the great scale of vibrations until their heads are in the clouds of conjecture. Perhaps they dare not speak of the possibilities they conceive.

Let us leave them hesitating in that exciting position, and start a tour of exploration on our own.

In a universe full of trillions of stars, of constellations and solar systems, there is one minute little revolving speck of matter which we call our earth. This speck of matter is covered with millions of microscopical creatures called human beings; and the strange thing is that these microscopical creatures consider themselves important; each minute one of them is able to feel that he is more important than the whole universe upon which he is but a speck.



Are these creatures really important, and if so, why?

Looking at them dispassionately we can see that there is at least one remarkable thing about them. Almost any one of them, by training his microscopical brain, is able to visualize the past, present and future, not only of his own little person, country or planet, but of the whole universe: within his tiny personality there is locked a power which will give him unlimited understanding of things quite beyond his physical reach, a dynamic capacity to wield the forces of Nature with a mind of which he knows not the limits.

Man is an animal, but he is an animal embodying a god. The ancients were much more alive to his potentialities than we are now. As we explore, it will take us some time to decide whether man knew more thousands of years ago than he does today, and whether he was a finer being.

This planet is infinitely older than most of us imagine, and so is the history of mankind. Archaeologists are continually having to push back their dates further into the past. Much learnt in history books by the last generation is obsolete, and must now be unlearnt! Civilizations had been rising, falling and disappearing aeons before the men who owned the paleolithic skulls were born.

All these things are revealed to us in the Ancient or Secret Wisdom, which is a collection of teachings handed down from the very earliest times, explaining man, his origin, his composition and destiny, and also the purpose of the Universe. This Wisdom has come to us in unchanged form, concealed and taught throughout the world under the garb of many of the ancient religions. We will trace this in a later chapter, but begin now by a study of the Wisdom itself as it is still to be found in the East.



This teaching professes to expound to us the few great fundamental laws upon which are founded the life and progress of man and the universe.

Let us endeavour to shake off the habits of thought imposed upon us by the generations of a Dark Age, and consider with an open mind the heritage bequeathed to us by our earlier ancestors.

The Great Laws can best be named for us in English as follows:

- (1) *Repetition: The Microcosm and the Macrocosm.*
- (2) *Evolution.*
- (3) *Cause and Effect, or 'Karma' and Rebirth.*
- (4) *The Plan of Creation, or the Seven Planes.*

The principle of the first of these Laws is: 'As in the Microcosm (man) so in the Macrocosm (the universe).' It asserts that the same system of form, time and motion runs through the whole universe, so that if we properly study an atom or a cell we will obtain the key to the workings of a man, a planet, or a constellation. In that way, through a knowledge of periodicity—or the regular periods of time which occur on a small scale in nature—the ancient mathematicians were able to calculate the stars, their movements, and thereby the evolutionary stages in history on a large scale, and to prophesy conditions and influences thousands of years ahead.

It is disconcerting to find that the conceptions of the very ancient sages tax the modern man's mind to the utmost. Even to understand their meaning and visualize their ideas takes effort and practice—much less could modern man originate such profound theories himself. And the ancients accomplished these things without, so far as we know, any of our modern mechanical aids.

This great Law of Repetition declares that there is an ordered arrangement within the universe, with cer-



tain periods of time and patterns of form repeated up the scale and governing the tiniest to the greatest. It asserts that the little things are a mirror of the larger ones, and everything is not only a replica but intimately connected with everything else. For instance, if you want to study animal, plant, mineral or even solar life you will find it all represented in the body of man himself.

'Man, Know Thyself', was the ancient command written above the temple door. If we persevere with this fascinating study we will find that in the form of every human being the universe is presented to us; we can inspect the solar systems of his atoms, the mineral world in its most active and creative form in his interior laboratory, and the physical development of animal life from its lowest to its highest form in his embryo. In his nature we will find a mixture of the passions and peculiarities of all living creatures. We can also trace an intimate relationship with all the planets through the interplay going on in his body with the cosmic and planetary rays, and a connection with the world of magnetism and electricity as well. And finally we will discover that man has in his puny frame the capacity to connect his mind with the highest unseen cosmic intelligence—the mind of 'Nature'.

This first great Law, then, that of the Macrocosm and the Microcosm, gives us at once a much more comprehensive outlook on life, and therefore the capacity of bringing vision and breadth into our creative work.

The second great Law is that of *Evolution*:

Everything in life is evolving upwards and onwards to a higher and more perfect state, having had its beginning in an uncreative, unconscious and elementary form, and growing and progressing through



striving, sacrifice and struggle to a condition of creative selfconscious potent strength.

Beginning at the lowest end of the scale with the minerals, we know that they have an elementary consciousness or mentality; that they strive, struggle and become tired, and that they are 'sacrificed' to or absorbed by the kingdom above them, the vegetable kingdom which lives upon them.

The vegetable kingdom has a higher consciousness or vibration than the mineral kingdom, and a greater power for struggling and adapting itself; in its turn it is sacrificed to the animal kingdom who feed upon it. The animals may seem to the plants to be some kind of deities, with wonderful and to them 'miraculous' powers of movement.

The sum of vegetable and mineral experience is absorbed by the animals, who depend on this for their life and evolution. In return, it is said that the animals provide, by their breathing, the carbon-dioxide upon which plants exist during the day. Some of the animals are becoming extremely advanced in consciousness, and are full of what can be described as (for them) spiritual aspiration. Mankind are their deities, and they strain and strive to attain, in such things as speech and work, to the miraculous activities of their gods. The adoring eyes of a dog and his efforts to talk, and the keenness and pride of an elephant at work are instances in point.

Animals are sacrificed in every way to man, who uses them to the utmost. He absorbs the sum total of mineral, vegetable and animal experience into his body, and depends upon their qualities for his life and evolution. In return he can teach and care for them and aid them immeasurably by his love and example.

We continue up the scale and find that in the kingdom of man the same process is going on. The more



advanced type of human being is sacrificing his lower nature, and striving to reach and copy a higher kingdom of beings than his own. He calls these beings angels, gods or deities, and has as much difficulty in understanding their wonderful capabilities as the animals have in understanding his own. But just as the animals depend upon man for the final development of their intelligence, so man depends upon the subtler and more inspiring minds of the 'angels' for his own awakening.

We are told, also, that, just as man depends for his sustenance and progress upon the lower kingdoms of nature, so the 'angel' world depends upon the offering and sacrificing of man's 'soul-force' for its own nourishing and development. Mankind and the angels can only reach greater heights of realization through the interplay of mutual service.

In accordance with the first great Law of Repetition we realize that the process must continue, and therefore we are bound to infer that the angels are also sacrificing to, and striving to reach, a higher kingdom of Beings than themselves.

The Ancient Wisdom has mapped out for us the pattern of these angel communities and Hierarchies. An amazing vista of worlds ahead of us is thereby opened up for our consideration.

The third great Law is that of *Karma and Rebirth*. This states that nothing in life is wasted, and all things share alike the chance of gaining ultimate perfection and of going through the full course of experience and development. We see that in the physical world as soon as a plant or other living creature has had its particular span of life it dies or withers. The cells which formed it disintegrate, but their chemical constituents come together at a later period to form a future plant or animal, closely resembling the



former one, but plus, *always*, a stage of further adaptability and change, showing that the consciousness and memory of the former plant has been reborn too.

When we come to a highly specialized consciousness like that of a human being, we are told that it is being continually reborn upon the earth, and that it struggles and strives upwards, perfecting and developing itself through numberless hard lessons and inevitable mistakes, until finally it reaches the stage of creative and conscious power which we call 'superhuman'.

The method by which experience and progress is assured is expressed in the ancient law of *Karma*. This word has not even an equivalent in the English language. Its meaning is 'cause-and-effect', or 'action-and-reaction'. We are told that all of life is built upon the law of opposites, as in the negative and positive poles of electricity, day and night, heat and cold, summer and winter, good and evil. The constant friction between these opposites causes development, change, adjustment—in other words originality, or the free-will which functions throughout all creation, and through which creation itself learns eventually to become creative.

All this happens so slowly (to us) that at times we do not realize that there is progress, because we become confused by the backward crouch of the wave of progress before a further push forward. Probably we are living at the time of a backward crouch now, and perhaps that is why so much that is bad in humanity seems to be driven to the surface, so that to some the world appears at present to be deteriorating.

The Laws of Rebirth and Karma work hand in glove, so to speak. We are told that mankind came into being because Spirit, or the life-force behind everything, wished to develop more creative power. This



development could only be accomplished by Spirit being so imprisoned and confined in matter (flesh) that It forgets Its oneness with Wisdom, and has to find everything out afresh through fighting and experience. So we are told that Virgin Spirit divided itself up into fractions and by ensouling the egos of men and all other forms of life, sank itself into the heavy imprisoning matter of this world, and is slowly and patiently fighting its way back to Truth and Light and Power. The human egos evolve steadily, each undergoing constant rebirth, until it gradually attains to a knowledge of the laws of the universe through Karma—or the effect of its own acts and thoughts, achieving power and strength through the mastery of one law after another until at last it reaches omnipotence both physical and spiritual. We might say that the friction between the opposite poles of spirit and flesh causes, as in electricity, light or energy, which is creative force-power! The planets, the earth, the races of mankind, the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms also reincarnate, all being under the same law. (We must mention here that it is not possible, according to the Secret Teaching, for man to be reborn as an animal, because however low he might sink in his own kingdom he could not retrogress into a slower vibration. This theory, called Transmigration of Souls, is held by certain peoples who have allowed their former knowledge to become distorted.)

Many persons here in the West find it rather difficult to accept this theory of reincarnation, because it has been stamped out for thousands of years. It therefore requires a great deal of unaccustomed mental exercise to obtain a real picture of it to hold in the mind. It is accepted quite naturally by most of the Eastern peoples, and has been for untold centuries, so that whether we believe in it or not we should go



into the theory as fairly and impartially as if we were studying their ideas on art or agriculture.

As a rule human beings are unable to remember anything about any past lives they may have had. Of course there are exceptions, and many people have collected a great deal of evidence of such memories, which evidence is extremely interesting. In fact, I think we would find it impossible to deny that *some* people, at least, have lived before. When we consider that we are unable to remember a great deal of our present life, especially things which have affected our characters deeply, until they are laid bare by a psychoanalyst, it is not surprising if we do not remember past lives. But we are told that the experience gained in such lives is retained by us in those qualities which we describe as 'having a conscience', an 'instinct' or a 'knack'.

According to this, then, a child prodigy is the result of continuous effort in past lives along some particular line. It might reasonably follow that imbecility is the result of a continuous refusal to use the brain and make effort; that to be a dwarf or cripple is the Karma of one who in previous lives neglected his body; and that an epileptic is probably discharging the debt of continuous immorality in a past life. In the light of this reasoning we could feel that there is no injustice or inequality in life, because the egos are choosing their own ways of learning life's lessons, which can only be learnt through experience and suffering. Believing this, then, we could blame our parents for nothing since we are the masters of our own fate, and reap exactly as we have sown in the past—the effect of the cause—Karma!

We are told that certain groups of people incarnate together at intervals. In this way old injuries and insults must be recompensed, old enmities finally ad-



justed, and old loves allowed to continue and to grow and beautify. Nothing is lost, nothing is wasted, everyone finally reaches the same goal of perfection, although they are all in such different stages and classes now. No man becomes perfect or attains his goal so long as there is a single feeling of enmity between him and another, or a score that has not been settled and wiped out by service and friendship. This is what Christ meant when He gave us that difficult injunction to 'turn the other cheek' and to 'offer thy cloak also to him who shall take thy coat'. If we 'love our neighbour as ourselves' we cannot mind to whom the coat belongs! These conceptions are very difficult for a selfish world to grasp as yet, and few of us have the pluck to try them out.

We limit ourselves by being possessive. The greatest things we can have—wisdom, health and power—are all-pervading, and cannot be divided. They can only develop and be shared. Possessiveness, on the other hand, causes wars, cruelties, jealousies and sufferings. It can never do any good, and usually despoils the most beautiful thing in life—Love.

Therefore, if we can once believe in Reincarnation we would realize that Fear is wasted effort, because though we have suffered death and pain often before we are here again! Fear is something of our own making, and it paralyzes us and renders us stupid.

Also we can see that it is better not to think evil, unkind or worried thoughts, because by doing so we are *causing effects* which we will have a lot of work in putting right again—Karma! Thoughts are things, and when we unloose an ugly or harmful thing into the world we shall be obliged to remove it. Thoughts persist in the ethereal regions, and are connected with the one who made them until they are disintegrated through his effort.



The fourth great Law is that of the *Plan of Creation* which teaches us about the Seven Planes. We learn that the whole of the solar system is built upon an orderly numerical system, and a set of seven definitely graded types of matter, substance, or, as the mystics and occultists call them, planes. These planes meet one another in a delicately graded sequence of interpenetrating vibrations with which the modern scientist is experimenting now. The scope of his discoveries lies roughly between the phenomenon of sound (with its lowest vibration at about sixteen to the second) to that of X-ray (whose highest vibrations are estimated at 2,305,843,009,213,693,952 per second). These vibrations constitute a portion of what is known as the chemical or physical world or plane. The ancients were able to understand and tabulate seven times as much as this, because they postulated seven worlds of different kinds of life, interpenetrating and influencing one another, through which were functioning the various life-forces, currents, rays, thoughts, emotions, and archetypes of form which combine to produce life as it is, with all its different complexities. They had all this thoroughly worked out, and understood just how these different forces were concentrated into man's body through the channels of his various glands. The doctors of today are still struggling with the 'unknown' functions of some of these glands because they have not had the inspiration to refer to the ancient knowledge and unravel the symbolism in which it was presented.

This symbolism was arranged and used both to awe the public and keep them from a knowledge which might be dangerous when in the hands of the ignorant and unprincipled, in much the same way as Latin is employed today by doctors. In times of high national morale more and more of the secrets were given out



and understood by the public. But in periods of decadence and materialism the priests and rulers themselves deteriorated, and the knowledge was hidden away and guarded by the few remaining initiates or sages.

We are emerging from a long period of such materialism at present, and that is why doctor, priest and public are confronted with the task of learning a great deal all over again, and revising the knowledge of their ancestors before they can carry things a step further.

This revision was begun at the end of last century by such people as Madame Blavatsky through the Theosophists, by the Christian Scientists, by Mesmer, and a host of others, who aroused the public desire to penetrate once more into the fundamental meaning of Life and its ultimate purpose. Since then modern methods have been used to unearth the Ancient Wisdom and once more reinstate it.

Some people say, "What do we want with the past? Let us go forward and be practical!" But as we have not yet been able to improve in some respects upon the conceptions of art, architecture, mathematics, ethics, and science of some of those very ancient civilizations to any degree, it will surely be worth our while to study the foundations upon which their mentalities were built.

The four Great Laws which we have enumerated in this chapter were a part of those foundations.

We hear people say, "Oh, the East is degenerate and effeminate, and social conditions there are terrible—therefore, of what use has that Ancient Wisdom been?" People like this should think further, realizing that the higher one mounts the lower one can fall. Degeneracy is the result of laziness, slackness and subsequent distortion of teaching, and has nothing



whatever to do with the pure teaching of a religion in its original form, which is nearly always fine. We have only to consider the original teaching of Christ, observing how we have degenerated that, with our long history of bloodshed, greed and oppression, to feel that we cannot point any finger of criticism at the East. Also, the East is now the prey of old age, and feminine in character, as compared with the vigorous, youthful, masculine Western civilization.

The four Great Laws are hidden in the Christian religion, and can be revealed with a little study, in spite of the mistranslation and censorship to which it has been subjected.

It is very necessary to see life as a Whole, and realize that we can obtain a high state of mental balance and vision only when we attempt to link together the past, present and future, and all the sciences, into one comprehensive and comprehensible picture.



### *The Lotus*

I AM BEING - - - SOUL CELESTIAL

Floating on Life's stream,

Letting go each non-essential,

Learning joy supreme.

Thus in perfect bliss and rapture,

Living Life sublime,

Only love and joy recapture,

Learning Love divine.

—*Justicia Edna Mason*



## *Meditation*

There is a great necessity for one on the Path to avoid too much talking. Practice listening, as there will be later the secrets given, which must be guarded and kept, and the Masters will not trust us with them until they have proved we can hold our tongues. Learn to tell only that which is necessary. Do not offer opinions unless asked for them. Over fifty per cent of our opinions are wrong anyhow.

Meditations develop the capacity to manifest courage. We must watch our emotions, as emotions shock the bodies and keep us from obtaining the poise and balance that is necessary. The Divine Power can only pour harmoniously through us clearly and effectively when all currents are in harmony. We must have steadiness to make light of the little things that would block and worry us.

Concentration is very necessary to apply ourselves to the thing that we are doing, to see our problems as something that we are privileged to work out for ourselves. We CAN help our reactions to the things that suddenly confront us. This is just where we are proved. Watch your reactions—they will tell you just where you stand in your self mastery.

Depression is wrong because we affect others negatively when we are depressed. Let no one else be hurt by us. In the Gospel we are told—"Woe unto him, by whom the offense cometh". When we arouse anger or malice in another we are those of whom the gospel speaks. Let us rather be the instruments to arouse good wholesome feelings in the hearts of our fellow men. Let us be attentive and apply ourselves to the things that we are doing. Let us bless them.

—ELIZABETH ANN PITTAM



The following excerpts are from the manuscript of a book by Norman M. Douglas, upon which he has reserved the copyright.

# JESUS THE CHRIST

## PART III

While it may not seem unusual to us of the present day, yet it is remarkable that Clovis, King of the Franks and traditional founder of the French Kingdom, should have been so devoted to the Christ Ideal. Such was his veneration for Jesus, he issued a proclamation throughout his entire kingdom declaring his convictions; and gave orders that all images of the heathen gods be destroyed: with the result that many of the people—following his example—became devoted Christians.

\* \* \*

It is said that Spinoza, like Jesus, was centuries—plus! ahead of his time; but thus is it with all great genius; if for no other reason than the average man's mental and spiritual evolution being slow. Howbeit, this great soul, "The Beloved Spinoza, was certainly one of the foremost thinkers of all time. What man was so versed in the science of philosophy; where is there a student having known contemplation such as was realized by Spinoza? What Rabbi e'er knew the Talmud as did he? — or had studied as deeply the works of Maimonides, Ezra, Creacas, Gabirol, Gerson, Cordova, etc? And yet, withal, Spinoza recognized Jesus as the greatest and noblest of all prophets; ac-



tually placing Him as "The First" among men and attributing to Him the "Eternal Wisdom of The Infinite!"

\* \* \*

*The First Choice* — By Morris Markey

"Several of us got to talking the other night on an idle notion that turned into an extraordinarily interesting game. Somebody asked this question: If you could spend an hour of intimate conversation with any figure that ever lived in the world, pose any queries you liked and be certain of sincere and thoughtful answers, who would it be? And he made it a condition of this magic hour that we might go back to the Great Man's own time, be transported to His day and His scenes—and that there should be no difficulties of language. . . . Among us there were Jews and Agnostics, a few blasphemers, yet everybody agreed that he had rather talk for an hour with Jesus of Nazareth than with any other soul that ever lived: had rather find himself suddenly in some village of Palestine walking with Christ in the shade of a few trees than to visit any other scene, any other men, that is recorded in history.

"It seems to me now that any other choice would be impossible. Virtually everything we do, in our world and our time, nearly everything we think, and even the languages we speak, spring from the few years which Christ spent upon earth. . . . Nor was it not, in the end, for the momentous events which He launched upon the world that we all wanted that impossible hour with Jesus. The absorbing enchantment lay in the fact that He is the sublime mystery of all the world. His words altered the course of all humanity—and yet we have not a single one of those words from Himself to explain the manner of Man He was. We



have only fragments that dwelt in a memory here and there, to be put down on parchment long after He was dead."

\* \* \*

"In the realm of trade, commerce begins with measurements that are fixed and invariable. For the security of merchants, the guilds of London saw to it that the yard and foot were built into the walls of the Houses of Parliament, thereby furnishing to buyers and sellers an invariable unit of length. In our own national capital, also, the government has preserved standards by which grain may be weighed, oil or wine may be measured, and cotton and silk bought or sold; and when disputes arise these pre-existing standards determine the controversy. But we must not think that this recognition of the importance of standards is an event of recent occurrence. Long centuries ago the kings of Egypt discerned that if the money standards were tampered with, if lying weights and measures were used in the market place men would cease to buy and sell. For the encouragement of trade, therefore, Cheops built his pyramid, and in the very center of that mountain of rock he hollowed out the king's chamber, and there fixed the standards for the merchants and husbandmen. Before the farmer bought his field he carried his measuring line into the pyramid, and tested it by the unit of length. Before selling his oil or wine, he poured the precious liquor into the hollowed rock. Through all the centuries trade has gone forward upon the basis of these pre-existing measurements. In the realm of mathematics the students begin with standards named intuitions. In the realm of music there are standards called the musical scale, and the distance between the notes, and in the realm of art there are standards called the complementary colors. In the nation, also,



this principle is seen to be important, and the code of the State and the Constitution furnish standards for the people.

"All these facts prepare us to expect that in the kingdom of morals and higher spiritual life men will desire some person who shall be to them a guide and standard in the art of right living. And it is in response to man's deepest nature and need that Jesus Christ seems to have entered the earthly scene, as an Ideal toward whom the noblest spirits will struggle—one who dwells so far above them that He never disappoints, in that any may overtake and pass Him. In former times men so emphasized Christ's divinity that He dwelt a thousand leagues above men, in a supernatural realm. It was of no more use to bid men walk in His footsteps than to tell them to create suns and stars. Now we know that Christ took upon Himself our infirmities; that He was tempted in all points like as we are; that He was bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, thought of our thought, will of our will; a fellow pilgrim with us, journeying toward the far-off kingdom of righteousness and character. . . .

"To Christ hath come the heroes who have destroyed tyranny; the patriots, who have laid the foundation of liberty; the reformers, who have dreamed of a new social order, exiles and martyrs, who have joyfully yielded up life rather than prove false to their higher convictions. These represent but in brief and fragmentary forms the full splendor of Christ's full manhood. Indeed, any attempt to make an exhaustive statement regarding the ideal elements in Christ is like attempting to make a full statement about the richness of the sun. . . .

"Christ is example for the radical and example for the conservative. He is example for the idealist, and also for the practical man of affairs. He is an ideal



for man with his strength, but also for woman with her tenderness and beauty. He is example for sinners, and this sinless one is also the standard for saints. All fragmentary excellencies that are distributed among men high and men low, are gathered up and made beautiful in the unified splendor of His glorious character. By reason of the limitations through ignorance and sin, it is probable that there are whole ranges of His divine manhood that have not yet dawned upon our vision. Let us confess that His nature is a universe not fully explored. In science each new addition to the telescope brings new worlds into sight. The schoolboy, walking home in the dark, needs a handful of stars to guide him, and the heavens supply the schoolboy's need. Grown old in reflection and study, some Lockyer needs a larger world. Straightway and in response to his needs and his new glass, yonder star breaks in two, becomes double, the two orbs, thought to be a unit swing apart, with millions of miles separating them, and the astronomer's need is satisfied, while he wonders, worships and adores. The character of Christ is a world that grows with our growing life. Confessing our limitations, we must affirm of Him, that now we see through a glass darkly, and know only in part that radiant one whom at length we shall see face to face."—Newell Dwight Hillis. (Author of "Right Living As A Fine Art", and "A Man's Value To Society.")

\* \* \*

Three outstanding teachers to have brought man The Light were Buddha, Jesus and Mohammed. Group the number of devotees that make up Buddhism, Christianity and Mohammedanism, and you will have close to one billion of the world's populace—nearly two-thirds! And while the great majority of these wrangle and fuss over the differences in *their* par-



ticular belief, we find a few among the minority that would live by the principle rather than exist to talk—and fight over—the difference. Hence, we need not be surprised that many great Buddhist seers have venerated Jesus—or that Mohammed, himself, paid Jesus the highest esteem, as we shall see. God and His humanity are One, and the principle in The Message or The Word is the same regardless of the Vehicle in, and through which, it is manifested.

Life is not unlike Jacob's ladder and—providing we are climbers—with each grasp of a rung, we shall *feel* and find an approach to God. A certain step of this or that religion is right and timely for this or that person—it is their manner of approach—their means of grasping: and it is chosen by their own soul. Thus the pity of our differing with another on his "Way to God"! The world consists of personalities, while the soul is purely individual. Hence, what appears as darkness to one personality may appear as light to another, and what seems as light to another person may appear as darkness to his brother: yet, as darkness has no real existence but is a lesser form of light, unbelief or atheism has no real existence but is a lesser (or a greater) form of faith. In reaching a certain spiritual height we can look back at friends and loved ones groping in the seeming darkness of Orthodoxy's creed and dogma; and we want to help them—to give them our light and understanding; but such is impossible.

Moreover, in attempting to take from our spiritual junior *his* ideal or religion, we are not unlike the over-bright, know-it-all, youngster of ten years attempting to take Santa Claus from the happily satisfied tot that hasn't yet reached seven—the age of reason. It is not only stupid and cruel to destroy in another the faith and idealism that sustains him but—unless we



can replace what we take away—our action may court his spiritual destruction for he is unable to “stand alone.”

And thus it is that religions have their purpose, while to the enlightened there is a common spiritual bond and a Divine mingling in Buddhism, Christianity and Mohammedanism. Hence, Mohammed's great esteem for Jesus. We quote Dr. V. Negri of Turkey, “Although the followers of Mohammed display some antagonism toward Christians, Mohammed's conception of Jesus was far from being antagonistic. He accepted the doctrine of His Virgin birth, as well as His Miracles of healing the sick, raising the dead and the ascension; but he denied the crucifixion and resurrection. Mohammed wrote of Jesus with esteem and recognized in Him all the qualities of a perfect prophet. . . .”

The following is taken from the Koran, the Mohammedan Bible: “Jesus, son of Mary uttered this prayer: ‘O Lord God, let your manna fall down from heaven so that there may be satisfying food for the highest and least of us as a sign of Thy power.’”



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